

Chapter 14: Techniques to Fix Discharges

Quick and efficient correction of illicit discharges begins with having well defined legal authority and responsibilities coupled with strong enforcement and follow-up measures. Chapter 4 discussed important considerations with respect to legal authority and responsibility and Appendix B contains a model illicit discharge ordinance that provides language on violations, enforcement and penalties.

Most illicit discharge corrective actions involve some form of infrastructure modification or repair. These structural repairs are used to eliminate a wide variety of **direct discharges** such as sewage cross-connections, straight pipes, industrial cross-connections, and commercial cross-connections. Fixes range from simple plumbing projects to excavation and replacement of sewer lines. In some cases, structural repairs are necessary when **indirect** discharges, such as sewage from a sewer break or pump station failure enter the MS4 through an inlet, or flows directly into receiving waters. Most **transitory** discharges are corrected simply with spill containment and clean-up procedures. Section 8.3 previously discussed an overview of the correction process. The following section discusses more specific correction considerations.

14.1 Implementation Considerations

Once the source of an illicit discharge has been identified, steps should be taken to fix or eliminate the discharge. The following four questions should be answered for each

individual illicit discharge to determine how to proceed:

- Who is responsible?
- What methods will be used to fix it?
- How long will it take?
- How will removal be confirmed?

The answer to each of these questions depends on the source of the discharge. Illicit discharges generally originate from one of the following sources:

- *An internal plumbing connection* (e.g., the discharge from a washing machine is directed to the building's storm lateral; the floor drain in a garage is connected to the building's storm lateral)
- *A service lateral cross-connection* (e.g., the sanitary lateral from a building is connected to the MS4)
- *An infrastructure failure within the sanitary sewer or MS4* (e.g., a collapsed sanitary line is discharging into the MS4)
- *An indirect transitory discharge resulting from leaks, spills, or overflows.*

Financial responsibility for source removal will typically fall on property owners, MS4 operators, or some combination of the two.

Who's responsible for fixing the problem?

Ultimate responsibility for removing the source of a discharge is generally that of either the property owner or the municipality/utility (e.g., primary owner/operator of the MS4).

Internal Plumbing Connection

The responsibility for correcting an internal plumbing connection is generally the responsibility of the building owner. Communities may wish to develop a list of certified contractors that property owners can hire for corrections.

Service Lateral

As with internal plumbing connections, the responsibility for correcting a problem within a service lateral is typically that of the property owner being served by the lateral. However, the cost of correcting a service lateral problem can be significantly higher than that of fixing an internal plumbing problem, so communities may want to consider alternative remedial approaches than those for internal plumbing corrections. For example, communities can have on-call contractors fix lateral connections allowing the problem to be fixed as soon as it is discovered. The community can then:

- 1) pay for correction costs through the capital budget, or state or federal funding options, or
- 2) share the cost with the owner, or
- 3) pass on the full cost to the property owner.

Infrastructure Failure Within the Sanitary Sewer or MS4

Illicit discharges related to some sort of infrastructure failure within the sanitary sewer or MS4 should be corrected by the jurisdiction, utility, or agency responsible for maintenance of the sewers and drains.

Transitory Discharge

Repair of transitory discharge sources will usually be the responsibility of the property owner where the discharge originates. Ordinances should clearly stipulate the time frame in which these discharges should be repaired.

What methods will be used to fix the problem?

The methods used to eliminate discharges will vary depending on the type of problem and the location of the problem. Internal plumbing corrections can often be performed using standard plumbing supplies for relatively little cost. For correction locations that occur outside of the building, such as service laterals or infrastructure in the right of way, costs tend to be significantly more due to specialized equipment needs. Certified contractors are recommended for these types of repairs. Table 65 provides a summary of a range of methods for fixing these more significant problems along with estimated costs. The last six techniques described in Table 68 are used for sanitary sewer line repair and rehabilitation. These activities are typically used when there is evidence of significant seepage from the sanitary system to the storm drain system.

How long should it take?

The timeframe for eliminating a connection or discharge should depend on the type of connection or discharge and how difficult elimination will be. A discharge that poses a significant threat to human or environmental health should be discontinued and eliminated immediately. Clear guidance should be provided in the local ordinance on the timeframe for removing discharges and connections. Typically, discharges should be stopped within seven days of notification by the municipality, and illicit connections should be repaired within 30 days of notification.

How is the removal or correction confirmed?

Removal and correction of a discharge or connection should be confirmed both at the

source, to ensure that the correction has been made, and downstream, to ensure that it is the only local discharge present.

For discharges resulting from internal plumbing and lateral connections, dye testing can confirm the correction. Also, sandbagging should be done in the first accessible storm drain manhole downstream

of the correction to verify that this was the only discharge present.

The correction of discharges resulting from some sort of infrastructure failure in the sanitary sewer or MS4 can be verified by dye testing or televising the line in conjunction with sandbagging and sampling at an accessible downstream manhole.

Table 65: Methods to Eliminate Discharges

Technique	Application	Description	Estimated Cost
1. Service Lateral Disconnection, Reconnection	Lateral is connected to the wrong line	Lateral is disconnected and reconnected to appropriate line	\$2,500 ¹
2. Cleaning	Line is blocked or capacity diminished	Flushing (sending a high pressure water jet through the line); pigging (dragging a large rubber plug through the lines); or rodding	\$1/linear foot ²
3. Excavation and Replacement	Line is collapsed, severely blocked, significantly misaligned, or undersized	Existing pipe is removed, new pipe placed in same alignment; Existing pipe abandoned in place, replaced by new pipe in parallel alignment	For 14" line, \$50-\$100/linear foot (higher number is associated with repaving or deeper excavations, if necessary) ²
4. Manhole Repair	Decrease ponding; prevent flow of surface water into manhole; prevent groundwater infiltration	Raise frame and lid above grade; install lid inserts; grout, mortar or apply shotcrete inside the walls; install new precast manhole.	Vary widely, from \$250 to raise a frame and cover to ~ \$2,000 to replace manhole ²
5. Corrosion Control Coating	Improve resistance to corrosion	Spray- or brush-on coating applied to interior of pipe.	< \$10/linear foot ²
6. Grouting	Seal leaking joints and small cracks	Seals leaking joints and small cracks.	For a 12" line, ~ \$36-\$54/linear foot ²
7. Pipe Bursting	Line is collapsed, severely blocked, or undersized	Existing pipe used as guide for inserting expansion head; expansion head increases area available for new pipe by pushing existing pipe out radially until it cracks; bursting device pulls new pipeline behind it	For 8" pipe, \$40-\$80/linear foot ⁴
8. Slip Lining	Pipe has numerous cracks, leaking joints, but is continuous and not misaligned	Pulling of a new pipe through the old one.	For 12" pipe, \$50-\$75 /linear foot ²
9. Fold and Formed Pipe	Pipe has numerous cracks, leaking joints	Similar to sliplining but is easier to install, uses existing manholes for insertion; a folded thermoplastic pipe is pulled into place and rounded to conform to internal diameter of existing pipe	For 8-12" pipe, \$60-\$78/linear foot ³

Table 65: Methods to Eliminate Discharges			
Technique	Application	Description	Estimated Cost
10. Inversion Lining	Pipe has numerous cracks, leaking joints; can be used where there are misalignments	Similar to sliplining but is easier to install, uses existing manholes for insertion; a soft resin impregnated felt tube is inserted into the pipe, inverted by filling it with air or water at one end, and cured in place.	\$75-\$125/linear foot ²
<p>1 CWP (2002)</p> <p>2 1991 costs from Brown (1995)</p> <p>3 U.S. EPA (1991)</p> <p>4 U.S. EPA (1999b)</p>			